



King County
Developmental Disabilities Division (KCDDD)
Early Intervention Program
Natural Environments Leadership Team (NELT), Phase II
Charter

Background:

Beginning in January 2006, the Part C Local Lead Agencies of Pierce, Snohomish, Yakima, and King Counties have collaborated in the implementation of services in natural environments and training and technical assistance opportunities in generally accepted evidence-based practices. As part of this collaboration, each County formed a "County Natural Environments Leadership Team." The KCDDD NELT met from April 2006 through October 2006 (Phase I) and advised the Local Lead Agency on the development of policy and procedures to assist the early intervention service system in complying with federal mandates regarding natural environments.

NELT Goals:

The goal of the NELT, Phases I and II, is to provide a productive and candid environment in which to advise and assist KCDDD in developing strategies to support the system of early intervention services in meeting the Part C natural environments mandate and implementation of evidence-based practices by early intervention providers.

NELT Activities:

The purpose of the King County Natural Environments Leadership Team, Phase II, is to:

- Continue to advise on policies, procedures, and guidelines as they relate to the implementation of natural environments;
- Serve as a clearing-house and resource for issues that emerge in the implementation of services in natural environments;
- Provide feedback and input to the County from local system stakeholders concerning issues and opportunities encountered in the process of implementing natural environments;
- Advise on strategies to support implementation of evidence-based practices;
- Advise on training and technical assistance needs and act as ambassadors/mentors to peers and colleagues at the family, community, and agency levels;
- Advise and assist with a self-assessment of the County early intervention system's implementation of evidence-based practices; and
- Advise on a process for evaluating implementation of evidence-based practices at all levels of the early intervention system.

NELT Membership and Structure:

King County's NELT, Phase I was comprised of the following membership:

- Three King County Interagency Coordinating Council (KCICC) members (KCDDD Board representative, parent representative, Lead/Independent Family Resource Coordinator);
- Five Early intervention provider representatives;
- One representative of professional training/technical assistance; and
- Two KCDDD staff

The NELT recommended that membership be expanded in Phase II to facilitate the implementation of service delivery in natural environments. The agreed upon configuration of the NELT Phase II expanded membership is to include:

- Physical Therapist (PT), Occupational Therapist (OT), and/or Family Resource Coordinator (FRC) members who would come from agencies not currently represented to have representation from all provider agencies;
- Parents who have received services in natural environments;
- Increased cultural diversity and expertise in providing culturally competent services; and
- Higher education–therapist preparation

The work of the NELT will continue to receive outside facilitation. Guest speakers and subject matter experts may be accessed as requested or needed. Meetings will be convened on a monthly basis.

NELT Work Product:

The NELT will build on the King County Natural Environments procedures document, which includes the Federal and State Part C definitions of natural environments. Utilizing evidence-based research and input from families, providers, and other stakeholders, the NELT will provide guidance and recommend resources to:

- Address identified gaps, barriers, and problems in the implementation of services in natural environments;
- Identify a body of evidence-based practices regarding early intervention services;
- Assist in the development of a qualitative evaluation of service delivery systems; and
- Recommend information, training and technical assistance for service providers, parents and other stakeholders

NELT Participant Commitment:

Individual members of the NELT, Phase II will make every effort to attend one meeting each month from November 2006 through May 2007 with no substitutions allowed. The NELT will review extension of the period of commitment as May 2007 nears.